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7. Hans Sachs, ed. Göz, III, 22 (Zarncke); cf. ed. Goetze-Drescher, IV, 30 (Wesselski, Arlotto).

8. Geiler, *Narrenschiff*, Strassburg, 1520, 88 Schar, 7 Schel, sign fiiij^b (Oesterley, Pauli).

9. Egenolf, *Sprichwörter*, Franckf. 1555, 340 (Oesterley, Kirchhof).

10. Euch. Eyring, *Proverbiorum Copia*, Eisleb, 1604, 3,546 (Oesterley, Kirchhof).

11. Basile, *Pentamerone* (trans. Liebrecht, 2, 111); cf. Ebert's *Jahrbuch* III (1861), 161-2.

12. Ign. Guidi, *Nuovi proverbi, strofe e raconti Abissini*, Rome, 1892, I (Basset, *Revue des Traditions Populaires*, VIII (1893), 292).

13. G. Pitre, *Proverbi siciliani*, Palermo, 1880, vol. III, p. 326 (*Zs. f. rom. Ph.*, v (1881), 407-8).

14. *Zimmersche Chronik*, ed. K. A. Barnack², IV, p. 46, Freiburg I/B. und Tübingen, 1882.

15. Johannes Mathesius, *Die siebende predig*, 1563, in *Ausgewählte Werke*, ed. G. Loesche, III, 144, Prag. 1906.

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THE TWO FALSTAFFS

Most critics have maintained that the Falstaff of Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor* is inconsistent with the Falstaff of *Henry IV*; that the latter is at all times master of the situation, the former a mere butt of practical jokes. Sidney Lee, for example, says: "Although Falstaff is the central figure, he is a mere caricature of his former self. His power of retort has decayed, and the laugh invariably turns against him. In name only is he identical with the potent humorist of *Henry IV*." And it has commonly been assumed that this is the result of Shakespeare's writing the *Merry Wives* hastily, at the command of Queen Elizabeth, who desired to see the fat knight in love.

Shakespeare, however, was at this time (1599) at the height of his comic powers. On *a priori* evidence it is unlikely that he would have written a poor play around his greatest comic character. And there is much more specific evidence that he has not done so. Hazlitt, as frequently, has an illuminating suggestion—although he is disappointed in the Falstaff of the *Merry Wives*. He says: "We could have been contented if Shakespeare had not been 'commanded to show the knight in love.' Wits and philosophers, for the most part, do not shine in that character." There is

amusing autobiography in Hazlitt's confession; but there is likewise penetrating criticism. And Shakespeare defends his own dramatic purpose by making Falstaff state that he realizes his helplessness: "Have I lived to be carried in a basket, like a barrow of butcher's offal, and to be thrown into the Thames? Well, if I be served such another trick, I'll have my brains ta'en out, and buttered, and give them to a dog for a new-year's gift." Again: "Have I laid my brain in the sun and dried it, that it wants matter to prevent such gross o'erreaching as this? . . . Have I lived to stand at the taunt of one that makes fritters of English?" And, finally: "See now how wit may be made a Jack-a-Lent, when 'tis upon ill employment! . . . This is enough to be the decay of lust and late-walking through the realm." Plainly an indication that the *Merry Wives* is, especially at its close, much more didactic than Shakespeare commonly permitted himself to be. Plainly, also, a proof that, in this play, he knew what he was doing and did it of malice aforethought. There is an adequate reason. Although, as the critics declare, Falstaff is not himself, this is due to the situation, not to inconsistency of character portrayal. Professor F. P. Emery, in his edition of the *Wives*, recognizes this: "It is apparent that he is the same man, simply placed in another situation." Shakespeare knew what he was about. In reality, it was stupid for critics and playgoers to expect Falstaff, in these new circumstances, to retain his old intellectual ascendancy.

For consider the Falstaff of *Henry IV*. He is in a certain sense an unreal, though a wholly convincing figure—for the reason that he refuses to take anything in life seriously. War is as much of a joke to him as a drinking bout at the Boar's Head; and he angers the Prince at a critical moment of the battle by proffering a bottle of sack for the pistol that had been requested. His presence of mind and quickness of retort are always superb; his impudence is almost sublime. "Hostess, I forgive thee," he exclaims, after he has abused her verbally *ad infinitum*. And, open-mouthed, she leaves the room to "make ready breakfast." What wonder that even hard-headed old Samuel Johnson should have said: "But Falstaff, unimitated, unimitable Falstaff, how shall I describe thee? Thou compound of sense and vice; of sense which may be admired but not esteemed, of vice which may be despised, but hardly detested. . . . Yet the man thus corrupt, thus despicable, makes himself necessary to the prince that despises him, by the most

pleasing of all qualities, perpetual gaiety." Falstaff creates around his capacious bulk a sort of Utopia which frees us temporarily from the worries and troubles of the actual world. It is only the critic without a sense of humor that ever regards the Falstaff of *Henry IV* from a serious standpoint and gravely debates whether he was a coward! What does it matter that Falstaff ridicules chivalry, honor, truth-telling, and bravery in battle? He is not to be taken seriously. As Professor Bradley has pointed out, he is not a subject for moral judgments, for he is a wholly comic character.

The fact is that the fat knight really belongs in a kind of *Midsummer Night's Dream*—in a play of fairyland. And at the close of the *Wives* Shakespeare introduces a midnight scene in Windsor Park, in which Falstaff is tormented by supposed fairies—an obvious reminiscence of the early play. In a drama of amorous intrigue Sir John is perforce entangled in the realities of life. In that character he cannot shine. He meets these realities again, at the coronation of Hal, his former boon companion; and the result is tragedy that wrings our hearts, and that almost enrages us against the creator, Shakespeare. A wholly romantic character is helpless in a wholly realistic situation. Even Falstaff is helpless. He is the most romantic figure in Shakespeare; but his romanticism is entirely the romanticism of humor. Romeo pales beside him. Falstaff was Shakespeare himself in his Mermaid Tavern humor, just as Hamlet was Shakespeare himself in his philosophical humor. In both these characters there is much of autobiography; we come very near to the heart of William Shakespeare. The dramatist himself was not fortunate in love—or at least in marriage. And Falstaff was not built for amorous intrigue. At the close of the *Wives*, he must needs be a sacrifice, even a burnt sacrifice—for the fairies touch him with their tapers—to a sermonizing song:

Fie on sinful fantasy!
Fie on lust and luxury!
Lust is but a bloody fire,
Kindled with unchaste desire,
Fed in heart, whose flames aspire,
As thoughts do blow them, higher and higher.
Pinch him, fairies, mutually;
Pinch him for his villainy.

A sermon on Falstaff! In *Henry IV*, it would be like introducing a Puritan as chief clown. But in the *Wives* it is fitting; for

Falstaff deliberately descends from his throne of wit, his Utopia of nonsense, and sets himself a definite, practical task, that of overcoming the virtue of two bourgeois wives of Windsor—although he confines his exertions chiefly to Mistress Ford. Now, if there is one thing that Falstaff is not, it is a romantic lover. Besides, the virtue of married middle-class respectability must not be impeached! Fittingly, then, we are reminded in the fifth act that Sir John is “old, cold, withered, and of intolerable entrails.” The only addendum is that the brain of anyone who expected him to succeed in his intrigue is more intolerable than the entrails of the fat knight. Shall Ariel be set to digging ditches? And shall true Jack Falstaff bend the amorous knee—a knee which, when he is standing, he has not been able to see for many a year—to Mistress Ford, who may be “merry” but who is certainly not a mistress of wit? The only female character in Shakespeare who could have played opposite Falstaff is Beatrice, in *Much Ado*. She would have understood him and appreciated him; but he would not have made love to her nor attempted to storm the citadel of her virtue. As for Doll Tearsheet, she is purely a comic figure, like Falstaff himself.

Did Queen Elizabeth, then, if she asked Shakespeare to show the knight in love, expect Falstaff to triumph in this rôle? I cannot believe that she was so unintelligent. Doubtless she expected an inglorious farce comedy; and this is precisely what she got. Shakespeare could give her nothing else. Falstaff is simply not at home in an atmosphere of amorous intrigue. Of his task in *Merry Wives*, Sir John could not have said, “’Tis my vocation, Hal.” Falstaff’s true vocation was that of freeing his hearers from the bondage of practical life, from the bondage of time, space, and Puritans.

A good deal might profitably be said of the relation of Shakespeare’s humor to his romanticism. Rosalind’s merry denial that anyone ever died of love springs instantly to mind; and Beatrice’s wit combats with Benedick. But Falstaff is undisputed lord of romanticism on its humorous side. His encomium on the operation of sack, which “ascends me into the brain, dries me there all the foolish and dull and crudy vapors which environ it, makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive, full of nimble, fiery, and delectable shapes,” is the most damaging essay against total abstinence ever written! Lamb’s burlesque *Confessions of a Drunkard*, good as it is, has nothing to compare with such a passage. No, Falstaff has

no peers in his own kingdom of Utopia. It is only when he leaves his specialty, his vocation, that he becomes a butt for middle-class virtue. We may all cry, after seeing the *Merry Wives*, "Ah, no more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me!" For how can Falstaff remain a supremely humorous character if he seriously assails the bourgeois virtue of Windsor? If he had only pretended to assail it, he could have remained himself; he could have continued to be unapproachable in wit and humor. But he takes his employment seriously. He steps out of his fourth-dimensional world into the real world. And the result is the opposite of the romantic humor of *Henry IV*. It is intensely realistic humor of a farcical trend, in which, however, witty dialogue is not entirely quenched "hissing hot" (like the hero in the Thames) in ludicrous action and situation. Falstaff is still Falstaff; there are no two Falstaffs. But he has changed his mind. He has been so foolish as to attempt to compete with people who take life seriously. And the fat knight now reminds us only of Thackeray's Jos Sedley - an awful reminiscence! It was cruel to Shakespeare to put Falstaff into Vanity Fair, into the real world but at any rate there is no inconsistency in the portrayal of the two Falstaffs. Old Jack may "divide himself and go to buffets," but he is still Jack to his friends and Sir John to all the world. Shakespeare has merely exhibited the dark side of his moon of jesters.

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AN EARLY SPANISH BOOK-LIST

Codex Escorialensis R-II-7 is a miscellaneous ms., containing some patristic writings, chiefly from John Cassian and Isidore, but particularly on fol. 113 r^o a catalog of books, in all probability from the monastery of Oña. This catalog is repeated on fol. 147 r^o, with some additions, in a mixture of Latin and archaic Spanish. This last fact is what induces the writer to offer it with some comments to the attention of Hispanists, though the book-list has been published by W. von Hartel in *Bibliotheca Patrum Latinorum Hispaniensis*, Wien, 1887, I, 125-126; by R. Beer, *Die Handschriftenschatze Spaniens*, Wien, 1894, p. 369-370, after Hartel and with references to the older literature; and by P. Guillermo Anto-